

***Southern Minnesotans need the certainty a five-year Farm Bill provides***

**Albert Lea, MN** –Today, Congressman Tim Walz, a member of the House Agriculture Committee, along with a broad coalition of agriculture groups and local farmers called on House of Representatives leadership to stop blocking the new five-year Farm Bill and bring it forward for a clean, up or down vote. The five-year Farm Bill, which Walz worked on tirelessly, passed through the Agriculture Committee with a strong bipartisan vote of 35-11 on July 11, 2012.

Despite this bipartisan vote in committee House leadership has since stonewalled and blocked a vote on the new Farm Bill, dubbed as a jobs bill for rural America. To make important decisions and plan for the future, farmers need the certainty that a five-year Farm Bill provides.

**“Congress needs to get its chores done. The five-year farm bill is ready to go and will give rural America the peace of mind and certainty they need to plan for the future,”** said Walz.

**“It’s time for House leadership to stop the political games, stop the brinkmanship, and do the right thing. Give us a clean, up or down vote on the bipartisan five-year Farm Bill now. Southern Minnesotans can’t wait.”**

Local farmers and agriculture groups agree; southern Minnesotans cannot afford to deal with the uncertainty that follows out-of-date policy extensions or “lame duck” action this winter.

**“We appreciate the work that the Senate and the House Agriculture Committee have done. We need the House to pass a comprehensive, long-term farm bill,”** said Minnesota Farm Bureau President Kevin Paap.

**“Farmers are faced with decisions that carry serious financial ramifications. We need clear and confident signals from our Members of Congress that they understand our concerns, and we need a farm bill done sooner than later.”**

The 2012 Farm Bill is ready to go. And, after hearing directly from southern Minnesotans, includes many of the provisions Congressman Walz authored.

These provisions will:

- Make it easier for our youth to take up farming and ranching operations and agriculture entrepreneurship.
- Increase energy access in rural America; improving efficiency and reducing input costs for farmers and small businesses.
- Ensure farmers have the flexibility to grow a wide array of crops without penalty or fear of losing their insurance.
- Save taxpayer dollars, conserve critical wildlife and hunting habitats, while still allowing farmers to manage their lands as they see fit.
- Keep shipping costs low for our food and electricity producers by giving local citizens a voice in railroad pricing negotiations.

In addition, the five-year Farm Bill makes the USDA more efficient by streamlining many programs to cut down on unnecessary paperwork and overly burdensome regulations for farmers. It eases access to lines of credit so that farmers who want to expand their business have the tools necessary to do so. And it reforms out-of-date dairy policy and strengthens crop insurance to protect taxpayers while also making sure farmers won't literally lose the farm if disaster strikes.

The message from rural America is clear: pass the Farm Bill, pass it now.

To read the five-year Farm Bill in its entirety, please [click here](#) .

###